

CCD BULLETIN

Issues in Coastal Community Development

FROM THE FIELD: PLANNING RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITIES

The State of Wisconsin passed a law in 1999 that fundamentally changed the way comprehensive planning is undertaken across the state. Commonly referred to as the “Smart Growth Law”, the law defines a comprehensive plan as consisting of nine elements ranging from housing, land use, and transportation to intergovernmental cooperation and implementation. The law requires that community actions related to zoning, subdivisions, and other land use issues be consistent with the comprehensive plan by 2010. Under this law, the State of Wisconsin also mandates public participation in all stages of the planning process and provides \$2 million annually in competitive grant funds for comprehensive planning. Grants totaling \$13.5 million have been awarded to 40% of the nearly 2,000 municipalities and counties in the state.

In support of this planning initiative, the Land Information and Computer Graphics Facility (LICGF) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison with the support of the University of Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute and the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program, created the Community Planning Resource (CPR) Web site. CPR provides access to a broad selection of planning resources to help elected officials, planning professionals, advocates, and landowners understand the issues and access the tools needed to participate in decisions about Wisconsin's future. It is designed for wide accessibility, requiring only a dial-up modem. CPR also includes a template that can be adapted to support local comprehensive planning efforts. This template was used to support the planning process in Ashland County on the Lake Superior coast.



CPR's Great Lakes Coastal Communities section provides a toolkit to support comprehensive planning and sustainable development along the Lake Michigan and Lake Superior coasts of Wisconsin. The section includes hundreds of annotated resource pointers on coastal issues, natural hazards, laws and regulations, model plans and ordinances, training opportunities, maps and GIS data, and news and current events. It also includes a web-adapted version of *A Guide to Planning for Coastal Communities in Wisconsin*, written in 2004 by the Bay-Lake Regional Planning Commission.

CPR also enables coastal residents to play a greater role in community development, while fully understanding and following the Wisconsin's “Smart Growth Law”. Wisconsin Sea Grant and LICGF encourage other Sea Grant CCD programs to use the CPR site as a template to support planning efforts in their coastal communities.

The CPR Great Lakes Coastal Communities site can be accessed at http://planning.lic.wisc.edu/new_Coastal/Coastal_Home.htm. For more information, contact David Hart at dhart@aquawisc.edu.



COMMUNITY TOOL SHED

Long-Term Hydrologic Impact Assessment Model (L-THIA)

www.ecn.purdue.edu/runoff/lthianew/

The Long-Term Hydrologic Impact Assessment (L-THIA) model was developed as an accessible online tool to assess the water quality impacts of land use change. Based on community-specific climate data, L-THIA estimates changes in recharge, runoff, and nonpoint source pollution resulting from past or proposed development. L-THIA is an ideal tool to assist in the evaluation of potential effects of land use change and to identify the best location for a given land use so as to have minimum impact on a community's natural environment. This Local Government Environmental Assistance Network site includes links to various L-THIA models, including a GIS version. Users can opt to use default settings for many parameters, or enter detailed site information for more accurate results.

Connecticut's Changing Landscape Web Site

<http://clear.uconn.edu/projects/landscape/index.htm>

Although this Web site is limited to land cover information for Connecticut, it provides an excellent model for other jurisdictions looking to provide an accessible way for residents to understand the extent and nature of recent development patterns. A product of Connecticut NEMO and the University of Connecticut's Center for Land Use Education And Research (CLEAR), the site contains animated maps showing land cover change in each of the State's 169 towns between 1985 and 2002. Users can also download .pdf maps of current land cover and a composite of changes for the 17-year period. In addition, each town's change profile includes a chart of land cover statistics for each of the years 1985, 1990, 1995 and 2002, and summary data for the total change in each cover type.



RECOMMENDED READING

Community Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding a Sense of Place

This guidebook from the Environmental Protection Agency addresses the social and cultural side of sustainable development. It details a process for assessing the "human dimension" of environmental issues, to assist those working with the public on planning and conservation efforts. The step-by-step process includes defining goals, identifying community characteristics, identifying and implementing an assessment method, and analyzing results. Case studies from throughout the country are also described. The document can be downloaded at www.epa.gov/ecocommunity/pdf/cccecomplete.pdf, or can be ordered free-of-charge by calling (800) 490-9198 and requestingr EPA Publication # EPA 842-B-01-003 from the Office of Water.

Mapping for Change: Using Geographic Information Systems for Community Development

This 24-page overview from the Local Initiatives Support Corporation LISC explains various real-world applications of the use of GIS to further community development planning, organizing and partnership-building. Feasibility, data needs and project sustainability are also discussed. Go to www.lisc.org/resources/assets/asset_upload_file645_991.pdf to download the document.

The CCD Bulletin is edited and distributed by the National Sea Grant Office. But for the most meaningful content, we're relying on you. We're especially interested in sharing your stories of successful (or less than successful) coastal community development projects. Please send your suggestions, submissions and insights to: Amy.Zimmerling@noaa.gov.